## **CLAIMS PENDING**

## What is claimed is:

## Claims 1 to 53 (canceled)

54. (original) A method of stabilizing a hydroquinone composition having a pH of about 5.5 to about 8.0 comprising:

adding a cationic salt of acidic ascorbyl esters.

- 55. (original) The method of claim 54 wherein the pH is about 5.5 to about 7.5.
- 56. (original) The method of claim 54 wherein the pH is about 6.0 to about 7.5.
- 57. (original) The method of claim 54 wherein the hydroquinone is present in about 1 to about 12 %.
- 58. (original) The method of claim 54 wherein the hydroquinone is present in about 2 to about 10 %.
- 59. (original) The method of claim 54 wherein the hydroquinone is present in about 2 to about 8 %.
- 60. (original) The method of claim 54 wherein the hydroquinone is present in about 3 to about 4 %.
- 61. (original) The method of claim 54 wherein the hydroquinone is present in about 4%.
- 62. (original) The method of claim 54 further comprising a water-soluble autioxidant.
- 63. (original) The method of claim 62 wherein the antioxidant comprises sulfite.
- 64. (original) The method of claim 62 wherein the antioxidant comprises sodium metabisulfite.
- 65. (original) The method of claim 64 wherein the sodium metabisulfite is present in at least about 0.05%.
- 66. (original) The method of claim 64 wherein the sodium metabisulfite is present at about 0.05% to about 0.5%.

- 67. (original) The method of claim 54 wherein the cationic salt comprises an inorganic salt.
- 68. (original) The method of claim 54 wherein the cationic salt comprises magnesium ascorbyl phosphate.
- 69. (original) The method of claim 68 wherein the magnesium ascorbyl phosphate is present in at least about 0.1%.
- 70. (original) The method of claim 68 wherein the magnesium ascorbyl phosphate is present at about 0.25 to about 3%.
- 71. (original) The method of claim 68 wherein the magnesium ascorbyl phosphate is present at about 0.25 to about 1%.
- 72. (original) The method of claim 62 wherein the antioxidant comprises sodium metabisulfite and the cationic salt comprises magnesium ascorbyl phosphate.
- 73. (original) The method of claim 72 wherein the sodium metabisulfite is present in at least about 0.05% and the magnesium ascorbyl phosphate is present in at least about 0.5%.
- 74. (original) The method of claim 54 wherein the cationic salt comprises an amino acyl derivative.
- 75. (original) The method of claim 74 wherein the cationic salt coroprises aninopropyl ascorbyl phosphate.
- 76. (original) The method of claim 54 wherein the cationic salt comprises a sodium ascorbyl phosphate.

Claims 77 to 106 (canceled)